



ST. MARY CHURCH
OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION



stj ST. JOHN VIANNEY
CATHOLIC CHURCH

Catholic Atheist

WEEK 5 - March 22-28, 2026

A Disciple Believes . . . WE CAN CHANGE!

In this fifth and final week of our Catholic “Atheist” Tour, we turn our attention to the truth that conversion and the spiritual journey are ongoing processes. Discipleship is not a one-time decision, but a lifelong transformation. A true disciple recognizes that, by the grace of God, we are continually being formed and can grow into the best versions of ourselves.

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, Thank You for loving us the way that You do. Forgive us for the times when we do not think or act as though we truly believe in Your unwavering love—when we allow worry to overtake us, or when we doubt that we can change and become stagnant in our spiritual journey.

We desire to be Your disciples—disciples who are confident in Your love and aware of Your presence in our lives; who pray regularly with joy; who resist worry; who deepen our relationship with You and grow more like You each day. Help us on this journey to become true believers, faithful disciples who seek to fulfill Your will in all things. We ask this through Your Son, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

INSIGHTS FROM WEEKEND’S READINGS

[CLICK HERE TO READ THIS WEEKEND’S READINGS](#)

- First Reading: [Ezekiel 37:12-14](#)
- Second Reading: [Romans 8:8-11](#)
- Responsorial: [Psalm 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8](#)
- Gospel Reading: [John 11:1-45](#)

In this week’s Gospel, Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead.

When Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick, He told the disciples, “This illness is not to end in death, it is for the glory of God so that the Son of God may be glorified by the means of it.” When we have an aspect of our character that we know we need to change, we can make poor choices to avoid changing: we can deny or hide the flaw so that others won’t see it; or we can wallow in guilt about it. Or we can make the good choice of learning from what Jesus says about Lazarus’ illness: our flaws need not end in death or failure, they don’t have to kill our spirits; rather, correcting them can be a means in which God is glorified, in which God gets the credit for our improved character. When we learn patience and self-control to correct an awful temper, God gets the credit! When we give up excessive alcohol or drugs, God gets the credit! When we pay our debts, God gets the credit! All give glory to God.

A Disciple Believes that We can change ... and in doing so, gives glory to God.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DIALOGUE

Take some time to reflect on this week's message and discuss with your group:

1. If you could change one thing about your character, what would it be?
2. What weaknesses in your character do you accept as just "who you are," instead of trying to change and grow?
3. What do you think about God being the One to change you? Why do we think we need to do all the working of changing ourselves instead of trusting God to change us?
4. What is the difference between understanding that we are God's work and just being lazy?
5. What is the next best thing you should do?
6. Read Philippians 1:6: "I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus." On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident are you in God's work in your life? Why do you answer as you do?

SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION

"Whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come." **2 Corinthians 5:17**

"It is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose" **Philippians 2:13**

PRAY

- Pray with the Litany of Humility(Found [here](#)) and ask Jesus for the grace.
- Come to spend a few minutes in adoration with Jesus this week. Plan a time and invite your small group to join you.
- Pray the serenity prayer- "God, Grant me the grace to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference."

ACT

- Write down the growth you have seen in yourself since the beginning of Lent, or even the beginning of your walk with Christ. Thank Him for where He has brought you to and from.
- If you weren't able to join last week for reconciliation at SJV, join this week at SMIC on 3/24 at 7pm.

INSPIRE

- When people comment on the change they see in you, give God the credit and glory for your change.
- Share the serenity prayer with someone
- Invite someone to come experience Holy Week with you.

INTERCESSIONS FOR THE GROUP

Take some time to pray together for the persons or people on the Hearts of your small group members.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father — Thank You for meeting us in our time together. Thank You for the insights shared and the ways You are working in our hearts together as a small group.

Help us to live out what we have learned, to trust in Your great love for us, and to grow as faithful disciples each day. Guide us, protect us, and keep us close to You throughout the week.

We ask this through Your Son, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**